

we make the Nation available to all religions and respect all religions and an individual's right to practice the religion they choose.

We were honored this morning by having the Imam here at the opening of our session. He demonstrated to our Nation that we are a diverse nation, diverse in our heritage. We are all either children or grandchildren or great grandchildren of immigrants, certainly in my family, my mother and my wife, first-generation Americans, speaking in a different language than English until they learned English. But we are also so different in all our religions. Look across the Senate floor. There are a number of different religions represented right here. We have Mormons, Protestants, Jews, and Catholics. It is a wonderful example of the diversity of this Nation. So I was pleased to hear Senator REID's comments. I associate myself with them. I thank the Imam for opening our session.

Mr. REID. Is the Senator from Vermont aware that this is the first time in the history of our country that a Muslim has offered the invocation for the Senate?

Mr. LEAHY. I was not aware of that. I certainly hope it will not be the last. I hope this will happen often. I also know that the visiting Chaplain honors us, but I also hope he knows the Senate honors him. My wife's brother is a Catholic priest. One of his great moments in his priesthood was when he opened the Senate session. He reminded us of that often. This is something we should do often, and I applaud the Chaplain in using his prerogative to make this opportunity available to so many others.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I join with my colleagues in welcoming the opening prayer this morning and say how much all of us appreciate this very important expression and how we value the message that was given to all of us today. I thank our leadership for giving us the opportunity to listen to this voice of peace and restraint and wisdom. I am personally very grateful to the guest Chaplain for his presentation.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will resume consideration, under the direction of Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member MCCONNELL, of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act. Rollcall votes on amendments to this bill are expected as the Senate works to complete action on this bill today. Hopefully by this afternoon sometime we can complete this most important piece of legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate is prepared to lay down the bill. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of H.R. 2506, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2506) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank both Senator LEAHY and Senator MCCONNELL for their work. I will have a number of amendments. Senator KENNEDY wants to speak briefly, and I ask my colleague from Illinois whether he also wants to speak.

Mr. DURBIN. Not at this point.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I follow Senator KENNEDY and be able to lay down the first amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, since September 11, the courageous acts of countless Americans have set a new standard for the Nation. As the whole world watched the horror on television, it also witnessed what is best in our country and our character. As buildings collapsed, the American spirit soared.

The indelible images of the first days will live on in all the days of our history. Firefighters and police risked their lives and gave their lives to save others, and hundreds of rescuers paid the ultimate price. The brave passengers of flight 93 fought and defied the terrorists, and in the face of their own inevitable death, they prevented the killing of so many others.

Construction and health workers went into the shadow of constant danger to search for the missing and help the survivors. The mayor of New York City went everywhere sustaining the city. New Yorkers lined up for blocks to give blood, and so did thousands more across the country. Hundreds of millions of dollars poured in for the families of the victims, as valiantly, tearfully, and quietly they said goodbye to a mother, father, son, daughter, or friend in funeral after funeral.

And through it all Americans have begun to think deeply about our coun-

try again. We have a new sense of the precious nature of our freedom which, in the years after the cold war, we have increasingly taken for granted. We have learned anew to prize the experiment called America—a nation based not on sameness, but on diversity—a nation of different races, backgrounds, and faiths, defined not by an accident of geography or history, but by the high aspirations for a better life and greater opportunity that brought so many millions to these shores from every continent and country on the Earth.

Now, we have seen, perhaps more clearly than ever before in our lives, how we are all in this together—how, if even one of us is hurting all of us hurt. Our first thoughts on September 11 were about others, not ourselves.

That spirit must now live on. It is the new standard by which we must measure everything we do.

Today, brave young Americans are on the front lines of the fight for freedom from fear. Here at home, we must stand together to face and defeat the terrorists who would poison our people, panic our society, and paralyze our democracy. An essential point of protecting our homefront is protecting our economy—because the state of our Union cannot be strong, if the state of our economy is weak.

We need to speak honestly and directly about the choices we face—and we need to do so in the same spirit which has rallied Americans since September 11. The standard is clear—to seek what is right for our country, and not just for ourselves; not to strive for private advantage in a time of national need. And that standard should be bipartisan—not the false bipartisanship of merely going along, but true bipartisanship, which is a two-way street, where we genuinely seek and respectfully debate what course is best for our economy, for rebuilding and restoring, and especially for all those who have been hurt in the downturn. As President Bush eloquently said when he spoke to the Congress, “We will come together to strengthen America’s economy, and put our people back to work.” Now all of us, in both parties, in both Congress and the administration, must live up to that all important responsibility.

Fundamentally, this, too, is a question of national security. For a strong economy is the basis of a strong Nation. It assures opportunity for all. It is the foundation of a decent and free society at home, without which we cannot fight for decent and free societies abroad.

Before September 11, the Nation’s economy was already weakening. The unemployment rate had been climbing for months. Relatively few new jobs were being created. Companies were announcing successive rounds of layoffs. Business investment was being drastically reduced, and profits were rapidly falling.